

**SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR DON SUICIDE INCIDENT REPORT  
(DONSIR)**

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1770-120 Reporting Requirements for Suicides,  
Suicide Attempts, and Suicide Gestures Jan 02 CD  
(b) SECNAV Suicide Program Brief of 11 Aug 98 (NOTAL)

1. Purpose. Pursuant to references (a) and (b), the Secretary of the Navy directed the Assistant Commander, Navy Personnel Command (PERS-6) to obtain a completed DONSIR for each suicide committed by Navy personnel. The DONSIR is an instrument designed to advance institutional knowledge about suicide among active duty Navy and Marine Corps personnel. The DONSIR yields information beyond the demographic data available on the Personnel Casualty Report (PCR). DONSIR results will be tracked and analyzed by prevention specialists to identify trends and suicide risk factors within the services. This information will yield prevention and risk management data to assist commanders in enhancing unit readiness and in targeting capabilities to improve local suicide prevention efforts. This instruction outline provides steps for commands to follow in completing the DONSIR and in reporting results to PERS-601. Effective completion of the DONSIR requires a collaborative effort by line and medical officers as well as other staff. Your command representative will ensure command review, endorsement, and mailing.

2. Intent. The DONSIR supports the Navy's review and reporting process on suicides. The DONSIR is designed to capture risk factor data, not to determine possible negligence or accountability in cases of suicide or suspected suicide.

3. Action. Within 3 working days after the receipt of the DONSIR, the command should identify a command representative who is to collect and record information on the DONSIR. For consistency, the command representative should be of officer rank.

a. Supporting team input should be sought individually or as a group from the CO/XO, medical officer, Family Service Center, chaplain, CACO, PMO, and/or local law enforcement agencies. Input should also be sought from the decedent's supervisor and co-workers. Coordination of input to complete the DONSIR will be determined by the command.

b. Within 20 working days of assignment of the command representative, the command shall forward the completed DONSIR with supporting documentation to PERS-601. Additional information should be forwarded as it becomes available (e.g., toxicology reports). The time limit is given to focus the command's efforts on information that is immediately available,

thereby to not burden the command with an open-ended and exhaustive data collection process.

4. Focus. The DONSIR focuses on data related to the decedent's military and professional life and is limited in scope with respect to the decedent's personal or private life. Completion of the DONSIR does not require input from non-military sources (e.g., family members, non-DoD associates, and civilian friends). The primary interest of the Navy is to determine modifiable service-related risk factors that can be used in the early identification and referral of at-risk personnel.

a. Unless deemed necessary by the decedent's Commanding Officer, interviews with the decedent's family members or civilian friends will not be conducted. In the event that the decedent's Commanding Officer deems such interviews are necessary, the officer completing the DONSIR shall coordinate all such interviews with the Casualty Assistance Calls Officer (CACO) who is responsible for ensuring the decedent's family and non-DoD associates understand that no policy, procedure, or law requires such contact. All contacts will not occur until family members and non-DoD associates are fully briefed by the CACO with an explanation of the protocol, purpose, limitations, and intended use of information obtained through post-suicide assessment and surveillance procedures. In all cases, extreme discretion is recommended in any decision to contact grieving family members and non-military sources for the sole purpose of obtaining information for completion of the DONSIR.

b. To avoid duplication of efforts, the DONSIR team should work in conjunction with established investigating bodies (e.g., Command's Staff Judge Advocate, Naval Criminal Investigative Service, or civilian authorities). Data derived from formal investigations may be used to complete various sections of the DONSIR.

5. Format. Two primary means of collecting data for the DONSIR are record reviews and interviews.

a. The following records should be used in completing the DONSIR (act quickly to access records earmarked for transfer):

- Military Service Record (including any records of counseling)
- Medical Record
- Secondary Records (e.g., Mental Health, FAP, Security Reports)
- Medical Appointments List (e.g., Composite Health Care System medical appointments for past 12 months)
- Financial Records (e.g., letters of indebtedness)

- Investigative Reports
- Autopsy Reports (it is recognized that ballistic and toxicology reports will likely not be available when the DONSIR team initially convenes; copies of these reports should be forwarded when they become available)
- Suicide Note(s)

b. A form to record interviews with military personnel regarding the decedent (e.g., the decedent's supervisor, co-workers, and peers) is found toward the back of the DONSIR. These interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and due consideration for the personnel involved. The purpose of these interviews is to provide firsthand accounts about the decedent and his/her behavior, not to determine accountability or culpability for the service member's death.

## 6. Description

a. Pages 1-2 of the DONSIR document basic identifying information on the decedent. Administrative information about the command representative administering the DONSIR should be noted in the POC section at the top of page 1.

b. Pages 2-7 yield trend and risk factor data. These pages have subsections related to: Military Service Information, Situational Factors, Use of Services, and Medical Information.

c. The Feedback Section on page 10 gives the command the opportunity to raise issues or concerns about the data collection process.

d. Page 8 is an interview form that the command representative can use to collect information from military personnel familiar with the case. This page can be copied locally and used as needed. Upon completion of the DONSIR, the command representative will provide a short written summary of the case (Narrative Summary - page 9). Special attention should be given to the item on this page regarding recommendations for program improvement. Items on this page will be scrubbed of identifying data and will be used in compiling "Lessons Learned" for the Fleet. The information will be presented in a format similar to messages published by the Safety Center following aviation mishaps.

7. Support. Questions about the DONSIR can be directed to PERS-601: (E-mail) Kevin.Kennedy1@navy.mil, (DSN) 882-4256, or (C) 901-874-4256.